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ABSTRACT

The Chicago Public Schools have recently been restructured by the Illinois General Assembly, radically altering patterns of governance (voice) and patterns of choice in Chicago. This paper analyzes the history of the Chicago restructuring campaign and the specific conception of school-based governance enacted into law. The paper also analyzes the school choice system that has existed in Chicago, its inequities for students at risk, and the effect of Chicago's past experience with choice on the content of the new school restructuring law. The paper then advances conclusions based on the Chicago experience and relevant research applicable to voice and choice issues in big cities. One essential feature of effective school-based management is giving majority control of school policy-making councils to parents and citizens, not to principals and teachers. Genuine educational improvement depends on the presence of other features, such as training for participation on these councils provided by groups independent of the school system, significantly increased principal accountability and authority, limitations on central administration's role, and availability of advisory resources for assisting schools in the change process. In Chicago and other big cities, choice programs have typically operated to increase the isolation of at-risk students, and have thus become a new form of discriminatory tracking. Creating equitable choice programs is not just a "program design" issue. Unless a school system makes and implements a fundamental commitment to improve educational services in all schools and for all student subgroups, school choice increases inequality. Choice is best viewed as a subsidiary strategy to augment the effectiveness of school-level governance reform characteristics described in this paper. (30 references) (MLH)

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Voice and Choice in Chicago

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Chicago, Illinois

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Summary

The Chicago Public Schools has recently been restructured by the Illinois General Assembly, radically altering patterns of governance (voice) and, to a lesser extent, patterns of choice in Chicago. This paper analyzes the history of the Chicago school system restructuring campaign and the specific conception of school-based governance that it successfully enacted into law. The paper also analyzes the system of school choice that has existed in Chicago, the inequities of this choice system for students at risk, and the effect of Chicago's past experience with choice on the content of the school system restructuring law. The paper then advances conclusions based on the Chicago experience and relevant research that have general applicability to issues of voice and choice in big cities.

Concerning governance: Twelve features should characterize school-based governance reforms that will have a substantial beneficial impact on the quality of educational programs and services for big-city students who are at risk of school failure. Contrary to prevalent conceptions of effective school-based governance, one essential feature of effectiveness is to give majority control of school policy-making councils to parents and citizens. However, including this feature in a school-based governance plan will only be effective in contributing to improved education, if other essential features are also present, such as training for participation on school policy-making councils provided by groups independent of the school system, significantly increased accountability for principals coupled with increased principal authority, limitations on the role of the central administration, and the availability of a range of advisory resources for assisting schools in the change process.

Concerning public school choice: In Chicago and other big cities, choice programs have typically operated to increase the isolation of students at risk, and have thus become a new form of discriminatory tracking. Potent organizational and political dynamics cause schools of choice to admit high-achieving and/or well-behaved students and to avoid students at risk. Consistent evidence about the operation of these dynamics in Chicago and other big-city school systems indicate that creating equitable choice programs is far more than a "program design" issue. Unless a school system makes and carries out a fundamental commitment to improve educational services in all schools and for all student subgroups, school choice increases inequality. Thus, to the extent that choice can contribute to overall improvement in big city school systems, it is best viewed as a subsidiary strategy to augment the effectiveness of school-level governance reforms with the characteristics described in this paper.

Donald R. Moore is Executive Director of Designs for Change, a children's research and advocacy group based in Chicago that he founded in 1977. Designs for Change conducts research across the country about the characteristics of big city school systems and promising strategies for improving them, particularly for low-income, minority, and handicapped students. In this research, Designs for Change has studied on-site assistance to school staffs implementing changes, the nature and costs of staff development, and student labeling and placement. In one study carried out for Carnegie Corporation of New York, Designs for Change analyzed the implementation and impact of parent and citizen advocacy strategies for school reform. Subsequently, DFC's school reform efforts in Chicago have been built on the findings of this study, and these reform efforts have included both parent organizing and training and advocacy for policy reforms. Over the past three years, Designs for Change has been extremely active in the campaign to restructure the Chicago Public Schools through action by the state legislature, and has played a leading role in drafting this legislation and in planning and carrying out the successful campaign for its adoption.

The Chicago Public Schools, the nation's third largest school system, was fundamentally restructured by the Illinois General Assembly in December 1988. After decades during which basic continuities of structure and procedure endured, Chicago has undergone what David Cohen, Professor of Education and Social Policy at Michigan State University, called "the most fundamental reorganization of an urban school system since the early part of the twentieth century." These changes will radically alter patterns of governance (voice) and, to a lesser extent, patterns of choice in Chicago. This paper addresses the following topics:

- Basic facts about the school system.
- Some key events and patterns from 1965 through 1986.
- The campaign to restructure school system decision making, including the nature of the campaign, content of the reform, and initial implementation.
- School choice in Chicago.
- Key conclusions about voice and choice.

The Chicago Public Schools: Basic Facts

Chicago is the third largest public school system in the United States, behind New York and Los Angeles. Table 1 presents some basic facts about the Chicago system. In 1986-87, its total enrollment was 431,298 students. This represents a significant decline from a top enrollment of 571,091 students in 1971. During this period of enrollment decline, the school system changed significantly in its racial composition. As reflected in Table 2, the percentage of white student enrollment in Chicago has declined dramatically since 1970, and the school system's Hispanic and Asian enrollments have grown as a percentage of total enrollment, with the percentage of black enrollment remaining roughly constant at 60%.

Table 1 also indicates that the 1986-87 teacher force included 26,506 teachers, of whom 47% were black, 46% were white, and 6% were Hispanic. Chicago has historically had a higher percentage of black teachers than many urban school systems, in part, because two local state universities, which were previously teachers colleges operated by the school system, have provided an avenue through which Chicago high school graduates can earn teacher certification and become teachers within the school system.

Education is provided through 594 schools, of which 492 are kindergarten through eighth grade elementary schools, 6 are either middle schools or junior highs, and 65 are high schools. In Chicago, most students attend a K-8 elementary school before entering high school, and only a few separate middle schools exist.

In recent history the system has been administered centrally, from a school headquarters that is popularly called "Pershing Road," because of its location. The system's eleven-member school board has been appointed by the Mayor, who has typically utilized a citizens screening panel to recommend slates of three candidates for each open position on the board. The Chicago Board of Education shaped a budget that totalled $1.9 billion in 1988-89. The board hires a chief administrator called the General Superintendent. From

Table 1. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT CHICAGO

1986-87	Chicago	
STUDENT ENROLLMENT TOTAL	431,298	100.0%
Black	259,555	60.2%
White	58,313	13.5%
Asian	12,088	2.8%
Hispanic	100,636	23.3%
Native American	706	0.2%
Other	---	---
TEACHING STAFF TOTAL	26,506	100.0%
Black	12,521	47.2%
White	12,057	45.5%
Asian	402	1.5%
Hispanic	1,493	5.6%
Native American	33	0.1%
Other	--	--
SCHOOLS	594 schools	
Elementary Schools	492 schools	
Middle Schools	6 schools	
High Schools	65 schools	
Other Schools	31 schools	
DISTRICT ORGANIZATION	20 districts K-8, geographic. 3 high school districts, geographic.	
SCHOOL COMMITTEE	11 members, appointed; nominating committee recommends to mayor.	

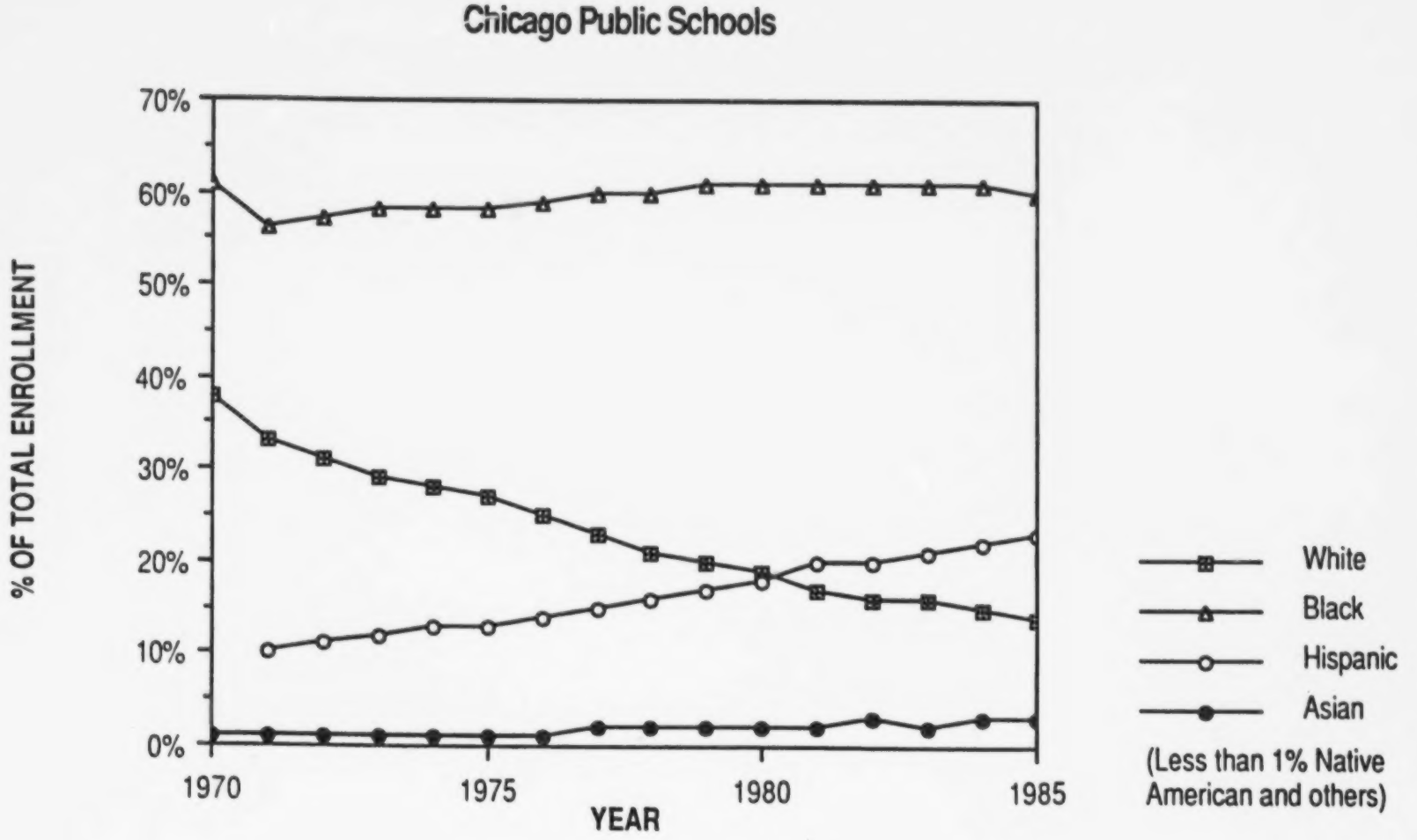


Table 2. ENROLLMENT TRENDS BY RACE

1970 through 1985, the school system was divided into twenty administrative districts, each headed by a district superintendent. In 1985, incoming superintendent Manford Byrd added three separate administrative districts for high schools. However, district superintendents have, with a few exceptions, not taken major independent initiatives, so that they have operated essentially as a layer in a bureaucratic hierarchy.

In response to pressures for more parent and citizen involvement in the late 1960s, the school system created Local School Advisory Councils and District Advisory Councils, consisting of a majority of parents. However, their function has always been essentially advisory, and they have characteristically been ignored or manipulated.[1]

Some Key Events and Patterns: 1970 through 1986

A few key events and patterns from 1965 through 1986, which are significant to understanding voice and choice in Chicago, are described below.

Ties to City Hall

Historically, the school system and the Democratic political organization that controlled city government were closely linked. For example, it was the custom, through the Richard J. Daley years and until the election of Harold Washington as mayor, for the roughly 20,000 non-teaching positions in the school system to be filled by city hall, with the school system merely certifying these decisions.[2]

Through the middle 1960s, the second source of power in the school system was Superintendent Benjamin Willis. He and the core of central administrators surrounding him had decisive control over key aspects of the system's operations, with the appointed school board exercising little independent initiative. One of Willis's priorities was maintaining neighborhood schools at a time when Chicago was judged to be the most racially-segregated big city in the country. A strong civil rights movement in the city organized for Willis's ouster and was finally successful in bringing about his exit in 1966.[3]

Reform Initiatives in the 1970s

The practices of Willis's two successors in the period up to 1981 did not represent a major break with the past. Superintendents James Redmond and Joseph Hannon both had significant prior histories as administrators in the system and were allied with various internal factions within the central administration. The mayor's office, both under Richard Daley and his successors Michael Bilandic and Jane Byrne, continued to exercise substantial influence over job appointments and contracts. Through 1979, the school boards appointed by Mayors Daley, Bilandic, and Byrne always included a few reform-minded appointees, but clear majority control was retained in the hands of appointees who were loyal to the mayor on critical issues.

During this period, no decisive educational reform thrust was adopted and implemented city-wide. A few alternative schools were started, for example, but they received little internal support, and there was never a cluster of such schools operating, as was the case in Philadelphia in the late 1960s. Subdistrict administrative offices were created, and parent advisory councils were established at each school, but these changes did not represent the kind of significant power shift that took place under New York City's decentralization plan.

For almost fifteen years, civil rights organizations contemplated filing a major school desegregation lawsuit against Chicago, but they were deterred by the costs that would be entailed. Finally, in 1980, the U.S. Department of Justice began to take preliminary steps toward filing such a lawsuit, and in response the school system expanded its program of magnet schools that were intended to increase desegregation through voluntary student transfers. These magnet schools, which became the core of Chicago's current system of school choice, are analyzed subsequently.

Responding to Fiscal Crisis

In late 1979, a major fiscal crisis disrupted the school system. During the 1970s, the Chicago Teachers Union had become increasingly well-organized, and had frequently struck or threatened to strike over wages and benefits. Settlements during the 1970s had resulted in pay raises that were not fully funded, and the finances of the system were kept afloat through shifting money between fiscal years and through using funds from restricted accounts to balance shortages in other accounts. When the system's large underlying deficit was brought to light, a series of changes were made through state legislation and subsequent school board action in 1979-80. Money was borrowed to balance the budget through the sale of bonds, a School Finance Authority was created to insure that lenders would receive their money and that the system would adopt acceptable fiscal procedures, a new board of education was appointed by the mayor, and the superintendent of schools, Joseph Hannon, resigned. Except for demanding the appointment of a new board, however, the legislature did not impose any structural or programmatic change on the school system beyond stricter financial oversight.

Outsider Introduces Reform Plans

After a national search, an outsider, Ruth Love, was named superintendent in 1981. She was the system's first minority superintendent and the first superintendent in the recent history of the school system without past experience as a Chicago school system administrator.

Love had the ability to generate enthusiasm for her ideas, and she initially gained support from key business leaders and from the media for her plans. With the new school board, she moved to settle the desegregation lawsuit that had by then been filed by the federal government. The resulting consent decree focused on encouraging voluntary desegregation through magnet schools, voluntary busing of minority students into white neighborhoods, and "effective schools" reforms designed to improve the great majority of public schools, which remained segregated.[4]

A second reform direction championed by Love was to institute city-wide a curriculum called Chicago Mastery Learning, a locally-developed curriculum for reading and math instruction that divided competence in these basic skills into several hundred subskills and featured multiple choice exercises to lead students to mastery of these subskills. The mastery learning curriculum became the subject of local and national controversy. While stoutly defended by some as a way to insure that students would learn basic skills and as a way to compensate for the deficiencies of the system's teachers, the curriculum was criticized by others as stifling teacher creativity, being poorly written, boring for students, and based on assumptions about learning not substantiated by research.[5] Reading achievement failed to improve significantly under mastery learning, as reflected in the achievement scores of entering high school students.[6] The curriculum was dropped shortly after Love's departure in 1985, in part because of protests from advocacy groups, teachers, and academics about its alleged inadequacies.

A third reform direction during Love's tenure, this one focused on the high schools, was a planning process for high school improvement called High School Renaissance. The Renaissance plan, developed largely by administrators within the school system, called for increased skill requirements for entry into high school, additional course requirements for graduation, remedial non-credit classes for low-achieving high school students, and dozens of other specific changes intended to improve the high school program.[7] During summer 1984, when the first stages of the program were slated for implementation, the school board postponed all but a few of the proposed Renaissance reforms. Some of the new course requirements were implemented, but almost no additional funds were allocated to provide services for low-achieving students. Subsequently, there was never a serious effort to implement the program.[8]

Thus, even during a period in which an outsider was specifically brought in to make major changes, the school system failed to implement new practices that improved student performance. Except for the expansion of magnet schools and the limited integration that resulted from the desegregation consent decree, Superintendent Love left Chicago's public schools essentially as she had found them.

Growing Black and Hispanic Political Power

In 1983, Harold Washington was elected the city's first black mayor. He was pressed both to do something to improve the schools and not to "interfere" in the schools concerning jobs and contracts issues in the manner of his predecessors. His main school reform initiative during his first term in office was an effort to appoint better school board members, screened and recommended to him by a citizens' nominating committee. As some of these appointees attempted to exercise more leadership, they came increasingly into conflict with Superintendent Love, who viewed herself as having wide decision-making discretion. In summer 1984, the board refused to renew her contract beyond its February 1985 expiration date.

The school board majority then moved quickly to appoint as the new superintendent Manford Byrd, a long-time administrator in the school system who had been an unsuccessful candidate for the job several times before. No striking initiatives were undertaken by Byrd in his first two years as superintendent. He expressed the view that the quality of education could be improved within the existing school system structure if "seasoned" people from within the system were elevated to key administrative posts.

Another important development during the period from 1980-85 was the emerging influence of Hispanics in the city and in the school system, as reflected by increases in the numbers of Hispanic aldermen, school board members, central office administrators, principals, and teachers. During this period, Hispanic parent and community groups pressed vigorously for expanded bilingual education, an end to overcrowding in predominantly Hispanic schools, accurate reporting of dropout statistics, and the appointment of school principals responsive to Hispanic concerns.

Role of the State Board of Education and State Legislature

Historically, the Illinois State Board of Education has emphasized the autonomy of local school districts and has been reluctant to intervene aggressively in local districts. This has been particularly true for Chicago, where the state board historically failed to mount systematic programs to enforce state law in such areas as bilingual and special education.[9]

Similarly, the state legislature (the Illinois General Assembly) historically confined itself primarily to debating how much money Chicago should receive and usually deferred to the proposals of the mayor, the board of education, and the employee unions in shaping Article 34 of the Illinois School Code, which applies only to Chicago. In spring 1985, as part of a state-wide school reform package, the General Assembly passed a modest school-based decision-making law modeled on the California School Improvement Program, which amended Article 34 and thus applied only to Chicago. Designs for Change, a parent and student advocacy group, played the key leadership role in advocating this legislation, which was called the Urban School Improvement Act.[10] Although the school system subsequently failed to implement this law, debate about the law introduced the concept of school-based improvement to some key legislators.

Organizing and Advocacy

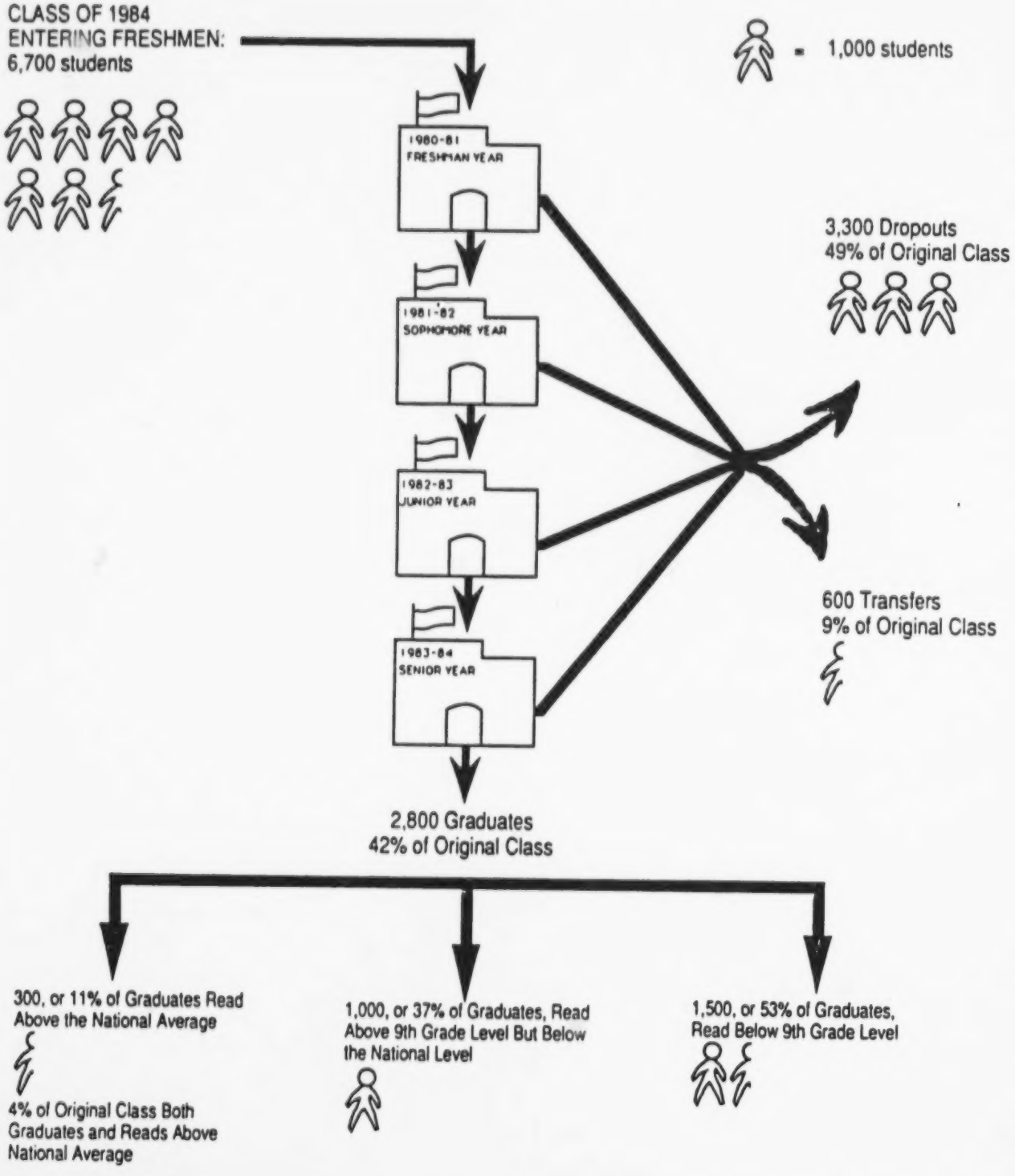
Chicago has had a long tradition of neighborhood and city-wide activism on such issues as housing, economic development, and education. One long-existing school reform group, Citizens Schools Committee, pressed during the Richard J. Daley years for a school board independent of city politics. In the 1980s, two city-wide advocacy groups have aggressively monitored some key aspects of school system performance and pressed various educational reform proposals. Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance, a coalition modeled on New York's Educational Priorities Panel, has monitored the school system's budget, analyzed such issues as the high school dropout rate and the quality of high school organization and instruction, and repeatedly pressed for related reform recommendations.[11] Designs for Change, a parent and student advocacy group that also does research about urban school reform nationally, has organized low-income and minority parents to press for school-level improvements, studied such issues as reading achievement, dropout rates, and special education, and advocated related system-wide policy changes.[12] The basic Designs for Change reform strategy was modeled on the work of similar advocacy groups active on school reform, such as Massachusetts Advocacy Center and Chicano Education Project ; DFC had studied such groups extensively in a research study supported by Carnegie Corporation of New York.[13]

In 1985, Designs for Change released *The Bottom Line: Chicago's Failing Schools and How to Save Them*.[14] This report highlighted data like that presented in Table 3, which indicates the high school graduation rates and reading achievement levels of those students who entered the eighteen Chicago high schools with the largest percentage of low-income students in fall 1980 and should have graduated in spring 1984. As Table 3 indicates, 6,700 students comprised the original entering class in these eighteen high schools, but only 300 of them (4% of the original class) both graduated and could read at or above the national average for twelfth graders.[15] Such results, widely-publicized in the Chicago media, helped convince parents and business that the school system was not improving, as its top administrators had frequently argued.

The Business Community

In 1981, Chicago United, a business group concerned about social issues in the city, conducted a large-scale study of the school system, through a set of committees that included business and civic leaders, school board members, and school system personnel. The Chicago United Special Task Force on Education made 253 recommendations on subjects ranging from audio-visual equipment repairs to student absenteeism.[16] The report did not call for major structural changes in the school system; instead it assumed that the existing structure could be perfected with improved leadership, staffing, allocation of

Table 3. CLASS OF 1984, CHICAGO NON-SELECTIVE LOW-INCOME HIGH SCHOOLS



Data Sources: Designs for Change, *The Bottom Line*, and Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance, *Dropouts from the Chicago Public Schools*.

authority, and operational procedures. The business leaders won a commitment from the board of education to create an office responsible for implementing the reforms that the report recommended. In 1986-87, Chicago United hired a consultant to assess the degree to which the original recommendations had been implemented. The resulting Chicago United report contributed to the restructuring campaign, as is discussed below.

The Restructuring Campaign: 1986 through 1988

Initial Role of Designs for Change

As of summer 1986, there was little organized activity focused on bringing about major reforms in the Chicago Public Schools, although there was a strong undercurrent of dissatisfaction among parents and business. In its annual planning retreat in July 1986, Designs for Change (DFC) assessed the impact of its neighborhood organizing and policy reform efforts to that point. The Chicago Board of Education had failed even to issue comprehensive guidelines to implement the Urban School Improvement Act that DFC had helped push through the legislature two years earlier. And DFC's school-level training and organizing has built an active network of parent leaders in 40 schools, but had only resulted in significant educational improvements in a few of them. Therefore, DFC concluded that nothing short of a fundamental restructuring of the school system by the state legislature was likely to provide an adequate basis for a system-wide improvement in educational quality. Through its research activities in various large urban school systems, DFC had had a chance to directly observe a range of efforts to reform urban systems, to interview individuals who had been involved in these efforts, and to accumulate research studies and other documents about these efforts. Thus, in formulating a restructuring plan, DFC drew on research and experience related to such topics as the decentralization of New York City and Detroit,[17] state-wide school-based management efforts in such states as California,[18] system-wide school-based management reforms in such cities as Salt Lake City and Tulsa,[19] various types of parent involvement and their relationship with student achievement,[20] and school district size and its relationship to student achievement.[21]

Drawing on such information and DFC's direct experience in Chicago, DFC developed the basic features of a strategy for restructuring the Chicago school system that emphasized instituting school-based governance with majority control of Local School Councils by parents and citizens, focusing the energies of these councils on school improvement, abolishing principal tenure, and limiting the size and authority of the central administration.

The C.U.R.E. Coalition

At about the same time in summer 1986, Michael Bakalis, Dean of the School of Education at Loyola University and former Illinois State Superintendent of Instruction convened a group to discuss school system restructuring. Initially, Dr. Bakalis and other group members favored dividing the school system into twenty subdistricts with elected school boards, following the New York approach to decentralization. Designs for Change, however, argued for a school-based governance plan, and the group swung around to this idea. Key members of the group at that point in fall 1986 included Dr. Bakalis, Designs for Change, whose basic constituency was black parents from Chicago's South Side, and the Save Our Neighborhoods/Save Our City Coalition (SON/SOC), a coalition of community organizations from white ethnic neighborhoods on Chicago's

Northwest and Southwest Sides. In fall 1986, these groups formed Chicagoans United to Reform Education (the C.U.R.E. Coalition), and released a position paper entitled *Needed: A New School System for Chicago.*[22] Among the major reforms that the paper advocated were:

- Shifting key decisions about staff hiring and firing, school budget, and school improvement to a School Council at each school, with a majority of elected parent and citizen representatives, but also including teachers.
- Hiring principals on a limited-year performance contract and abolishing principal tenure.
- Limiting the authority of the central administration and placing a cap on its size that would make it significantly smaller.
- Increasing family choice of the school a child attended, while insuring fair admissions procedures for school choice.

These key elements of the C.U.R.E. proposal were all embodied in the legislation that passed the General Assembly more than two years later in December 1989.

In April 1987, C.U.R.E. held a city-wide conference at Loyola University attended by 400 parents, citizens, and educators from 80 schools, which was aimed at introducing the C.U.R.E. reform proposals to a wider audience. At that point, C.U.R.E. intended to continue building support for its proposal through the summer and fall of 1987, to draft detailed legislation in fall and winter, and to introduce their legislative proposal in the General Assembly in spring 1988. C.U.R.E. thought it likely that the first introduction of the bill would be primarily to educate the General Assembly, with serious consideration of the bill probably coming in spring 1989. Designs for Change hired a well-respected lobbyist, Larry Suffredin, to begin work on this effort.

A New Business Strategy

In the 1986-87 school year, while C.U.R.E. was shaping its initial reform ideas, Chicago United, the business group, was preparing an analysis of the school system's implementation of its 1981 school reform recommendations, as discussed above. This report, released in July 1987, concluded that while about half of the group's 1981 recommendations for school system reform had been implemented, the most important recommendations focused on improving student learning had not.[23]

Further, the report embodied a fundamentally different viewpoint about whether significant improvements in student achievement could occur without major structural change. The report concluded that student performance could not be improved in a centralized system, and called for a major shift to school-based autonomy, including, for example, the right of elected Local School Councils to hire and fire principals, set school budgets, and develop school improvement plans. Chicago United's call for structural change and its focus on school-based governance was influenced in part by the proposals of the C.U.R.E. Coalition. The report's authors also saw support for such restructuring proposals in the internal restructuring efforts that had been carried out by a number of major Chicago businesses, which placed emphasis on cutting the size of middle management, shifting major decision making responsibilities in the local store, plant, or office, and being more responsive to the customer.[24] Upon releasing their report, Chicago United indicated a

commitment to work not only with the school system but also with parent and community groups to implement its recommendation.

The Catalytic School Strike

In September 1987, the Chicago Teachers Union failed to reach agreement with the board of education on a new contract, with the board arguing that it did not have enough money available to grant even a small teacher raise. A month-long strike ensued, the ninth in eighteen years. This bitter strike catalyzed a level of parent and community activism around Chicago education that had not occurred since the 1960s. Parent and community groups sprang up in different parts of the city demanding an end to the school strike and improvements in the schools.

C.U.R.E. members sought to use the strike as an opportunity to educate the public about their reform proposal and to argue that parents should stay active to demand basic reform, and not be satisfied merely with an end to the strike. C.U.R.E. convinced several additional groups with strong roots in black and Hispanic communities to join C.U.R.E., including Centers for New Horizons, Near North Development Corporation, and People's Coalition for Educational Reform. While the strike proceeded, C.U.R.E. also sought legal assistance for translating its reform ideas into a detailed legislative proposal, arguing that the community response to the strike greatly increased the chances for action by the Illinois General Assembly. Designs for Change succeeded in enlisting help from two key partners in a legal and political consulting organization called The Haymarket Group; Tom Coffey (Mayor Washinton's former chief lobbyist) and Al Raby (the leader of the campaign to oust Superintendent Willis in the 1960s and Mayor Washington's former campaign manager) agreed to help Designs for Change seek financial support to underwrite Haymarket's legislative drafting assistance for the C.U.R.E. plan. The Haymarket Group obtained a commitment to provide the needed funding from Richard Dennis, a Chicago commodities trader active in social reform and politics. C.U.R.E. members and these attorneys then began a lengthy process of drafting legislative language and reviewing it line by line, in an effort to achieve consensus within a diverse coalition on a host of complex and potentially divisive issues.

The school strike ended with enormous bitterness. School teachers received only a 4% pay raise, despite losing a month of pay. And unlike previous years, parents and citizens did not simply drop the school reform issue when schools reopened, but instead maintained the level of activism that had characterized the strike. While this continuing activism may have resulted to some degree from the efforts of C.U.R.E. and other established school reform groups, the qualitative difference in parents' resolve to press for further reform, as compared with past strike situations, cannot be attributed primarily to these organizing efforts, and the underlying causes are not clear.[25]

The Mayor's Education Summit and the ABC'S Coalition

Seeking to lead and direct the continuing grassroots movement for reform, Mayor Harold Washington announced a mass meeting at the University of Illinois at Chicago on October 11, 1987, which was attended by more than 1,000 people. At this meeting, the mayor announced his intention to expand an Education Summit group that he had established nearly a year before. The Summit already consisted of representatives from the school board, teachers union, business community, community organizations, and city-wide reform advocacy groups. To these representatives, the mayor added a Parent Community Council that was both to formulate its own reform proposals and to have representatives on the Summit group. Mayor Washington charged the Summit with developing a consensus

proposal for comprehensive school reform. One month after the University of Illinois meeting, Mayor Washington died of a massive heart attack, which left the Summit to the leadership of his successor, Acting Mayor Eugene Sawyer.

The various groups within the Mayor's Education Summit began a process of formulating positions and debating alternatives, a process that entailed dozens of committee meetings on issues ranging from the appropriate composition and authority of Local School Councils to the best ways to increase teacher professionalization. During this process, members of the C.U.R.E. Coalition sought to introduce and win support for their specific reform proposals. Early in the Summit process, the business community authorized the Chicago Partnership, a coalition of eight major business organizations, to develop and advocate the business community's position on school reform. The Partnership's first major position paper was very close to the C.U.R.E. proposal in its recommendations about school site governance, cutting the central administration, and school choice.[26] In addition, the business leaders' proposal advocated steps to increase teacher professionalization. Finally, the proposal mentioned an idea that became a major priority for the business leaders over the next several months: creating a powerful oversight authority that could monitor the school system's implementation of reform and could intervene to remove board members or withhold funds if reform was undermined.

Gradually, as the Summit progressed, a closer working coalition developed between parent, neighborhood, and city-wide reform advocacy groups within the Summit (including C.U.R.E. supporters), and the business representatives. In March 1988, this coalition began to meet regularly to come to common agreement on positions that should be advocated in the Summit meetings. As time passed, this coalition within the Summit won a range of amendments to the initial Summit reports, most of which brought the Summit report closer to the principles espoused in the C.U.R.E. plan and the business community's school reform position paper. This coalition within the Summit ultimately emerged as the Alliance for Better Chicago Schools (ABC'S Coalition), the main coalition that ultimately pressed successfully for the adoption of a sweeping school reform bill by the General Assembly.

The Focus Shifts to Springfield

As the Summit process progressed, a major issue that surfaced was whether or not the Summit agenda should be put into legislative form or whether it could be enacted primarily by the school board. Having experienced the school system's previous failures to carry out new policies that the board had adopted, C.U.R.E. was convinced that reformers had to embody their proposals in state law. Thus, even before the Summit convened, C.U.R.E. had begun to lobby state legislators. Since Chicago had its own section of the school code, C.U.R.E. believed that they could help pass a sweeping reform law in the General Assembly. C.U.R.E. felt that it could succeed with a strong grassroots organizing effort in all Chicago legislative districts, plus an appeal to legislators from outside Chicago ("downstate" legislators) to restructure the Chicago school system so that they could insure that the state monies voted for Chicago did not continue to be wasted. This strategy was developed through the advice of Designs for Change's lobbyist, Larry Suffredin, and the Haymarket Group, which had by then secured support not only for Haymarket to assist C.U.R.E. with legislative drafting but also with lobbying and public relations. Thus, C.U.R.E. completed its 144-page legislative proposal in February 1988 and, on April 28, 1988, secured well-regarded legislative sponsors to introduce it, including Representatives Carol Moseley Braun and Al Ronan, and Senators Miguel DelValle, William Marovitz, and Robert Kustra.[27]

Meanwhile, the ABC'S Coalition continued to press its specific reform proposals within the Summit. The final position statement approved by the Summit in April 1988 included almost all the proposals for restructuring the school system contained in the C.U.R.E. plan and the Chicago Partnership's plan, along with proposals for a variety of other reforms, including expanded early childhood education, reduced class size, and career ladders for teachers.[28] The mayor's staff was then charged with drafting a bill that reflected the Summit proposal. However, the bill that the mayor's staff drafted failed to include many key elements of the approved Summit proposal, and the Summit rejected it in a unianimous vote.[29] At that point, the Summit's credibility was decisively undercut, and the focus shifted to the General Assembly in Springfield.

The Fight in the General Assembly's Spring 1988 Session

Shortly after the Summit members rejected the bill prepared by the Mayor's staff, three other legislative proposals from various Chicago reform groups joined the one already prepared by C.U.R.E; these bills were drafted by the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finances, the Parent Community Council from the Education Summit, and one of the parent groups that had grown up during the strike.[30] These proposals all reflected the Summit's agenda to a greater or lesser degree and were introduced by various Democratic legislators. Eventually joining them were bills drafted by the House Republicans and the Senate Republicans, which proposed to divide Chicago into a number of virtually autonomous school districts in a manner similar to the New York City decentralization.[31]

C.U.R.E. members pressed the business groups and others who had formed the ABC'S Coalition to back the C.U.R.E. legislation, which C.U.R.E. had agreed to modify by incorporating the oversight authority proposed by business leaders. While ABC'S would not agree to an exclusive endorsement of the C.U.R.E. legislation, ABC'S members agreed to a detailed statement of key elements that had to be included in an acceptable school reform bill, and they stated that the C.U.R.E. legislation most adequately embodied this set of principles.[32] The business leaders committed themselves to devote substantial resources to a legislative campaign in Springfield, supporting a public relations firm, a lobbyist, a major Chicago rally that brought out 1500 people, and buses for Springfield lobbying. Further, chief executive officers of major corporations became directly involved in lobbying for the bill, making several trips to Springfield. Also critical to strengthening the ABC'S campaign at this point was a firm commitment by United Neighborhood Organization (UNO), an Hispanic community organization that had been active in the Mayor's Summit and in the ABC'S Coalition, to support the C.U.R.E. bill. With UNO's involvement, the reform coalition had significant grassroots strength in almost every section of Chicago.

During the months of May and June, ABC'S carried out a legislative strategy that one Republican legislative called "the most effective grassroots lobbying campaign I have ever seen." Legislators are accustomed to large one-day demonstrations in Springfield with hundreds and even thousands of participants. The ABC'S Coalition's emphasis was on the continual presence of ten to thirty key leaders in Springfield over a six-week period, weekly bus caravans to Springfield with 50 to 150 parents, a petition campaign (organized by Designs for Change) to sign up 10,000 supporters for the C.U.R.E. bill, and constant phone calling and face-to-face visits in the legislators' home districts.

Added to this grassroots pressure was an effective lobbying and public relations effort that was carried out by the Haymarket Group, the Designs for Change lobbyist Larry Suffredin, and the public relations firm and lobbyist hired by the business leaders. With

agreement on a a set of 29 key elements that had to appear in a satisfactory bill, with specific legislative language consistent with these elements (i.e. the language of the C.U.R.E. proposal), and with lobbyists working for them who were on good terms with both Republicans and Democrats, the ABC'S coalition was well prepared for the legislative process. As various legislative proposals moved through the House and Senate, the ABC'S coalition was frequently successful in convincing legislators to incorporate key concepts and language consistent with the ABC'S position.

The reformers were also aided by the fact that the Chicago school system and the Chicago Teachers Union were not being listened to, largely because their credibility had been damaged by the bitter school strike.

Typically, the General Assembly puts off action on important bills until the last days of their regular session, which ends on June 30. Key pieces of legislation that various legislative leaders and the Governor want passed are then used as bargaining chips in a comprehensive deal among the majority leaders of the House and Senate (currently both Democrats), the minority leaders of these bodies, and the Governor (currently a Republican). Pivotal in this process is the Speaker of the House, Michael Madigan, who exerts extremely strong control over key pieces of legislation. In late June, 1988, Speaker Madigan indicated that he would convene a meeting of the various reform groups, school system representatives, and union representatives to hammer out a school reform bill. What followed was 26 hours of meetings in the Speakers office, where concepts were agreed to, legislative language drafted, and then the specific wording of the draft bill was reviewed line by line. Further, it became clear as the meetings progressed that Speaker Madigan, Representative John Cullerton (who chaired the meetings on his behalf), and Senator Arthur Berman, the Chair of the Senate's Elementary and Secondary Education Committee, who also played a key leadership role in the deliberations and in the overall legislative process, were willing to support a bill that incorporated much of the ABC'S reform agenda. Further, the ABC'S Coalition was once again able to capitalize on the numbers of its representatives involved, the clarity of its reform proposals, its informal avenues of communication with legislators and their staffs, and its ability to prepare specific legislative language quickly. Thus, ABC'S had a decisive influence on the final bill prepared by the Democrats, which incorporated ??. Also important in this final drafting process was the staff of the Chicago Panel on Public School Policy and Finance, who made a major contribution in drafting language concerning the cap on the central administration, the shifting of additional money to low-income schools, and school-based budgeting.

As this bill was being drafted, negotiations began between the Republican and Democratic legislative leaders and the Governor about key legislative issues pending for the final days of the session, including school reform. The Republican leadership and the Governor indicated that they would support the school reform bill as it had been drafted, if several specific changes were made in it. Such a compromise would have insured that the bill passed with strong bipartisan support and would be signed by the Governor. While the reform coalition did not view the changes demanded by the Republicans as significant, these changes were offensive to the Chicago Teachers Union, which had pledged in the final day of the negotiations in Speaker Madigan's office to support the Democrat's bill, and to the Legislative Black Caucus. The Democratic leadership decided to push through the Democrat's version of the bill, which was finally passed by on party-line votes of 31-24 in the Senate and 68-37 in the House on July 2, 1988, as Senate Bill 1839, the Chicago School Reform Act. Because the bill was not passed until after the deadline for the regular session and a 60% majority could not be assembled to support the bill, the Illinois Constitution required that the effective date of the bill be delayed for one year, until July 1, 1989.

The Governor's Veto and the Fall 1988 Veto Session

Given the partisan party-line action on Senate Bill 1839, the reform coalition's next concern was that Governor James Thompson, a Republican, would veto the bill. Under the Illinois Constitution, the Governor has extensive powers not merely to sign or veto a bill, but to sign a bill but make major substantive changes in it through a process called an amendatory veto. After the Governor acts on bills approved by the General Assembly, the General Assembly then meets for two weeks in November to consider bills the Governor has vetoed altogether or amendatorily vetoed. Vetoes can be sustained by a simple majority or overridden by a 60% majority. If neither action occurs, the whole bill dies.

In the month after the Chicago School Reform Act was passed, Republican legislators strongly attacked the bill, and the school system and various groups who had previously opposed it identified several technical errors in the bill. The ABC'S Coalition urged the Governor to sign the bill and argued that any technical errors could be rectified through a "clean-up" bill in the veto session, a common legislative practice. However, on August 26, 1988, the Governor announced his intention to amendatorily veto the bill and invited comments on changes that should be made. His resulting changes raised three issues that threatened to split the Democrats' support for the bill.[33] The amended bill denied any job protection to teachers dismissed because of declining enrollment, gave the Mayor and the Governor equal appointment power to a School Reform Oversight Authority, and included a hold-harmless provision for the use of state compensatory education funds that potentially diminished the shift of these funds to predominantly low-income schools, as mandated in the original bill.

The prevailing view among observers of the legislator was that no accommodation would be reached between the legislative leaders and the Governor, and that the bill would die. The ABC'S Coalition, however, geared up a campaign for the fall veto session that had the same elements as their earlier effort: grassroots lobbying at home, a constant presence in Springfield during the two-week veto session, position papers that analyzed the key points at issue and ways in which they could be resolved, and recommendations for specific legislative language. One strategy employed in the final week of the legislative session was to obtain the endorsement of the bill by a group of 26 nationally-prominent educators. In the last days of the veto session, a compromise was reached on a new bill, Senate Bill 1840, which was then passed by bipartisan votes of 56-1 in the Senate and 98-8 in the House on December 1, 1988 and signed by the Governor on December 12, 1988.

Some Highlights of the Chicago School Reform Act

The Chicago School Reform Act (passed as Senate Bill 1840 and now known as Public Act 85-1418) rewrites Article 34 of the Illinois School Code (which applies only to Chicago) and fundamentally restructures the Chicago Public Schools.[34]

Local School Councils

A Local School Council (LSC) is established at each school, consisting of six parents elected by parents, two community residents elected by community residents, two teachers elected by the school's staff, and the school principal. Parents and community residents on the Councils may not be school district employees. The initial LSC elections will occur in October 1989 for two-year terms.

One key power of the LSC is to directly appoint the school's principal to a four-year performance contract, if seven of the ten elected members can agree on one candidate.

Principal tenure is abolished, and the school system may not establish additional requirements for principal eligibility beyond state certification. This stipulation dramatically expands the number of individuals eligible for Chicago principalships, ending an examination process through which the school system has historically certified only a few hundred principal candidates every three or four years. Half the contracts of current principals expire on June 30, 1990 and half on June 30, 1991. The LSC negotiates a performance contract with the principal, adding to a basic system-wide contract, if they wish. At the end of four years, the LSC can decide whether to reappoint the school's principal or select a new one.

The LSC has two other key decision making powers. First, the LSC helps develop and approves a school improvement plan, which must spell out how the school will boost student achievement, cut truancy and dropout rates, and prepare students for employment and further education. Second, beginning with the 1990-1991 school year, Local School Councils will have substantial budget flexibility, with the power to help develop and approve their school's budget.

Local School Councils must receive 30 hours of training annually in school budgeting, educational theory, personnel selection, and other areas, either from the central administration or from an independent organization of the LSC's choosing.

School Principals

As noted above, principal tenure is abolished, and principals will be selected for four-year performance contracts. In addition to this major shift in accountability, principals also have substantially increased authority. Any vacancy in the position of teacher or of other educational personnel will be filled by the school's principal, without regard to seniority. Further, the engineer in charge of the building and the food service manager, who previously had their own separate administrative hierarchy within the school system, must now carry out the "reasonable orders" of the principal.

Teachers rated as unsatisfactory by the principal may be dismissed after a 45-day remediation period, rather than the current one year. However, teachers retain present due process appeal rights if they are dismissed.

The principal is responsible for the management of the school, for implementing the school improvement plan and the school budget, and for helping develop the improvement plan and the budget. The principal, with the assistance of the Professional Personnel Advisory Committee described below, has the authority to develop the specific methods and content of the school's curriculum, within system-wide curriculum objectives and standards and within the specifications of the school improvement plan.

Teachers

In addition to their two positions on the Local School Council, teachers will have a voice in the school through a Professional Personnel Advisory Committee. The PPAC advises the principal and the Local School Council concerning curriculum, staff development, the contents of the school improvement plan, and the school's budget.

Teachers presently teaching at a school who have seniority retain the right to stay there, but they must apply for an open position at any other school at which they wish to teach. After the twentieth day of the school year, no teacher may be dismissed because of reduced enrollment, which increases staff stability. Further, teachers who lose their position because of declining enrollment or a change in the school's course offerings must be

provided employment by the school system while they seek a new teaching position, but they are not guaranteed a job at a particular school. Finally, since curriculum will be determined at the school level, teachers will have an increased role in curriculum development and in choosing their own materials and methods.

Subdistrict Councils and Subdistrict Superintendents

Subdistrict Councils are established in each of the 23 existing elementary and high school subdistricts. They are composed of one elected parent or community member from each Local School Council within the subdistrict. They select a Subdistrict Superintendent for a four-year performance contract. The Subdistrict Councils and the Subdistrict Superintendent have the power to identify schools that are not taking appropriate steps to improve and can intervene to remedy these problems, through a step-by-step process spelled out in the law. As a final sanction for schools that do not respond, the Central Board of Education may remove the Local School Council, the principal, or the staff at a non-performing school or close the school.

The Subdistrict Council and Superintendent are responsible for promoting coordination and communication among Local School Councils and joint programs among schools. It is also anticipated that some services for which the Central Board of Education remains responsible will be provided to schools through the subdistrict structure.

Central Board of Education

The current Central Board of Education is removed thirty days after the law's effective date, which has recently been changed to May 1, 1989, and a seven-member Interim Board will be appointed by the Mayor and will serve until May 1990.

A School Board Nominating Commission, composed of one member elected from each Subdistrict Council and five members appointed by the Mayor, will screen candidates for the permanent Central Board and recommend slates of three to the Mayor, whose final selections must be approved by the City Council.

The Central Board has all the powers and duties of a board of education as prescribed by state law, but these powers and duties are subject to other provisions of the law, including the powers of Local School Councils and Subdistrict Councils. Among the Central Board's key duties are the specification of system-wide curriculum objectives and standards, supervision of special education and bilingual education, provision of transportation and school meals, development of a system-wide discipline code, and construction, major renovation, and closing of individual schools. Further, the Central Board is responsible for protecting civil rights and intervening if there is evidence of any violation of civil or criminal law, as well as for taking final action against a non-performing school that fails to respond to the Subdistrict Superintendent and Council.

The Central Board is required to prepare a "system-wide educational reform goals and objectives plan," which must be approved by the School Finance Authority, as described below. The Central Board must then implement this plan to the satisfaction of the School Finance Authority.

Central Administration

The Central Board selects a General Superintendent for a three-year performance contract to implement its responsibilities. The General Superintendent manages the central administration in carrying out its reduced responsibilities. Beginning in September 1989,

the Central Board must adopt and implement a budget that does not exceed the average proportion of funds spent on central administration by school districts in the state. This expenditure cap will result in a substantial decrease in central administration expenditures, as compared with present levels, with the savings passed on to local schools.

State Compensatory Education Funds

Currently, compensatory education funds provided by the Illinois General Assembly to Chicago for the education of low-income children (called State Chapter 1 funds) are not fully allocated to the schools that generate them and those State Chapter 1 funds that reach low-income schools are largely supplanted by the withdrawal of others funds. Over a five-year transition period, State Chapter 1 funds (currently $240 million) must be fully allocated to each school in proportion to its percentage of low-income students, must supplement other funds, and must be used for activities determined by the Local School Council.

School Choice

By January 1990, the State Board of Education must complete a study of strategies for increasing family choice of the school that a student attends. Beginning in 1991-92, the school system must carry out a plan for phasing in increased family choice. However, student admissions in the school choice program must be carried out through a lottery admissions process, transportation must be provided for low-income students, and the school choice program must be consistent with the Board of Education's desegregation consent decree. Existing magnet schools with officially-approved selective admissions requirements are not part of this program.

School Reform Oversight

The existing School Finance Authority, brought into existence during the school system's financial crisis in 1979, assumes major powers for overseeing reform for a five-year period. The Authority approves and monitors the implementation of the Central Board's system-wide educational reform goals and objectives plan, monitors a number of additional aspects of school system finance that they did not previously oversee, and may prohibit the Central Board from entering into any contract inconsistent with the plan. If the school system fails to submit a satisfactory system-wide reform plan, fails to implement an approved plan, or otherwise fails to carry out its obligations to the School Finance Authority, the School Finance Authority has wide data-gathering and investigative authority, may direct the Board to take specific actions, and may impose sanctions on board members and school system staff who fail to comply, including suspension and removal.

Initial Steps to Implement the Reform Law

In the period from December 1988 through April 1989, a number of initial developments in implementing the law have taken place, including the following:

- Forty organizations who were active in supporting the reform law have formed six task forces to work for its appropriate implementation, focusing on parent and citizen training, community organizing, monitoring school system implementation, additional legislation needed, teachers, and principals. Among the objectives of these six task forces are to provide at least six hours of training to 10,000 potential candidates for Local School Councils and to press for a state income tax increase in the spring legislative session that will bring more money to the Chicago Public Schools.

- Two of the business organizations who supported the school reform law established a separate non-profit organization, Leadership for Quality Education, to support school reform implementation, and a top executive of AT&T took early retirement to head the group.

- Although several members of the present Chicago Board of Education initially criticized the reform legislation, the board established eighteen task forces to make plans for implementing the law. The reform coalition has been highly critical of many of the resulting reports, which, in their view, are often based on assumptions about how the school system should operate that are contrary to the new law.

- The board began a national search for a General Superintendent, with the current General Superintendent, Manford Byrd, indicating he had a strong interest in being reappointed. With Byrd's contract expiring in March 1989 and the likelihood that the search would continue into the summer, the board granted Byrd a one-year extension of his contract, which provides that if another individual is selected as superintendent, he will serve out the balance of his year's extension as a consultant to the board.

- In April, the city completed a mayoral election process that resulted in the election of Richard M. Daley, son of the former mayor. Early in his campaign, Daley came out in strong support of the school reform legislation. He promised to appoint members of the reform coalition to the Interim Board of Education and to a new position of Deputy Mayor for Education. He has supported action by the General Assembly to move the appointment of the Interim Board from July 1 to May 1, and this bill has passed the General Assembly and been signed by the Governor.

- The Chicago Principals Association and an organization representing current Subdistrict Superintendents have filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the new law. This lawsuit against the school system and state officials argues that principal tenure is a property right that cannot be taken away from currently tenured principals and that the Local School Councils are improperly constituted, violating one-man one-vote principles and the state election law. The reform coalition has enlisted a major Chicago law firm to help them intervene in this lawsuit on behalf of parents.

School Choice in Chicago

While the Chicago School Reform Act was primarily focused on changing patterns of governance or "voice," as explained above, the law also includes provisions for increasing family choice, beginning in the 1991-92 school year. School choice has been a major issue in Chicago over the past decade, and school choice in Chicago was studied by Designs for Change as part of a recently completed analysis of high school placement and labeling practices in four cities: New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Boston.[35] This study entailed more than 300 interviews in the four cities, analysis of quantitative data about the characteristics of students in different kinds of high schools, analysis of documentary evidence from the four districts, and the perspectives of a study advisory panel composed of individuals knowledgeable about school choice in each city. Below, we briefly review some key findings from this study that illuminate the current nature of school choice in Chicago.

A Brief History

Most students in Chicago currently have the opportunity to apply to a substantial number of options schools and programs, which serve as a potential alternative to their neighborhood elementary or high school. The most frequent points of entry into these schools are either in kindergarten or in ninth grade, but entry at other grade levels is possible. Historically, Chicago students have not faced the extensive menu of options that they do today; before 1970, most students simply attended a neighborhood school determined by their residence.

However, long before the movement for school choice began in the 1970s, Chicago operated some elementary schools and high schools (or programs within schools) whose seats were filled through special application—typically schools, such as Lane Technical High School, that served the system's highest achieving students.

At the high school level, a second long-standing alternative to the neighborhood high school was the vocational high school. In Chicago, two different types of vocational schools emerged: schools that were academically selective and schools that were non-selective or had very minimal selection criteria. The academically selective vocational high schools, such as Chicago Vocational High School, typically had moderate academic admissions requirements as compared with schools like Lane Tech. However, their usual combination of basic skills achievement, course grades, behavior, and attendance requirements nevertheless excluded a significant portion of the school system's total enrollment from securing admission.

Beginning in the late 1970s and continuing into the 1980s, Chicago steadily established more options schools and programs as alternatives to neighborhood schools. Such options, for example, focused on higher achievers (as did the long-existing exam high schools and programs for the gifted), embodied a particular educational philosophy, addressed an area of student interest (such as the arts), or emphasized preparation for a particular occupation. They were either entirely separate schools or programs <u>within</u> existing neighborhood schools.

The major impetus for establishing these options on a substantial scale was the school system's effort to develop a less controversial alternative to mandatory student busing to remedy racial segregation. The proponents of options (or magnet schools, as they have been most frequently called in connection with school desegregation) argued that students (especially white students) could be enticed to attend integrated schools if they voluntarily chose to attend because these schools offered attractive educational programs.

The net result of the movement for options has been a dramatically increased array of such options in Chicago. For example, eighth grade students could apply to 76 high school Options for Knowledge programs for fall 1986, including Lindblom Technical High School, the International Baccalaureate Program at Kenwood Academy, Word Processing and Typesetting at Amundsen High School, and Allied Health Preparatory at DuSable High School.[36]

At first glance, catalogs of available options might suggest that the typical Chicago student had a substantial opportunity to attend a school tailored to his or her interests and needs. However, critics of the movement to increase options in Chicago and other large cities have argued that, in actual practice, options have failed to live up to their promise and have undermined, rather than improved, the quality of education for the average urban high school student.

Underlying the controversy about the pros and cons of options high schools and programs, at least in Chicago and other large cities, is a basic question about who is educable and whose interests should be served first, if there is a conflict between the education of low-income children and of middle-income children. Some proponents of options high schools and programs argue that they can benefit all students, and point to a few situations where the objective of making options available to a full spectrum of students is apparently being seriously pursued. In Chicago, however, some proponents of options express doubts that the majority of low-income children can be educated or that middle-income parents (whether black, Hispanic, or white) will allow their children to attend schools with low-income children; they see options schools and programs as a way to keep the middle class in the city and to recompense middle-class parents for the contribution that they make to the schools through property taxes.[37] The study gathered and analyzed evidence about several of the key controversies surrounding options in Chicago and the three other cities.

Choice in Chicago: Some Data about Six Types of High Schools

The analysis of school choice in Chicago completed by Designs for Change focused primarily on high schools, although the study also analyzed the overall process of school choice from grades K-12 to establish a context for understanding the high school choice process. Below, we present and discuss data about high schools, but these data illuminate patterns that occur at all levels of the school system.

Using a rationale and methodology described in detail in the full research report, the research team analyzed data about the characteristics of students in six types of high schools: Academically Non-Selective Low-Income High Schools, Academically Non-Selective Low- to Moderate-Income High Schools, Academically Non-Selective Moderate-Income High Schools, Academically Selective Vocational High Schools, Academically Selective Magnet High Schools, and Academically Selective Exam High Schools. In Tables 4, we present some summary information about these six types of high schools in Chicago and the other three school systems studied, indicating the number of schools of each type, the numbers and percentages of students who attended schools of each type, and the name of a typical high school of each type in each school system.

Of particular interest in Table 4 are the percentages of Chicago students who attended academically selective high schools versus academically non-selective high schools. As Table 4 indicates, 81% of Chicago high school students ended up in non-selective high schools, while 19% attended academically selective high schools.

Considerable effort was expended by the research team to identify and analyze data about the characteristics of students attending the six different types of high schools. Consistent with our research plan, we were interested in documenting:

- The social background and other characteristics of students who attended these six types of high schools, including characteristics that have been shown through past research to put students at risk of school failure.
- The educational experience of students while they were attending these six types of high schools.
- The outcomes of high school education for students in these six types of schools, including reading achievement and graduation rates.

Table 4. SIX TYPES OF HIGH SCHOOLS

Types of High Schools	New York	Chicago	Philadelphia	Boston
NON-SELECTIVE LOW-INCOME				
Number of Schools	25 schools	18 schools	7 schools	5 schools
Student Enrollment	62,391 students	28,614 students	11,718 students	4,356 students
% Total System Enrollment	24.4 %	25.8 %	20.4 %	26.4 %
Example	Theodore Roosevelt High School	DuSable High School	Franklin High School	Charlestown High School
NON-SELECTIVE LOW- TO MODERATE-INCOME				
Number of Schools	25 schools	18 schools	7 schools	4 schools
Student Enrollment	73,069 students	27,109 students	18,294 students	4,576 students
% Total System Enrollment	28.5 %	24.5 %	31.9 %	27.7 %
Example	Louis D. Brandeis High School	Lakeview High School	Overbrook High School	South Boston High School
NON-SELECTIVE MODERATE-INCOME				
Number of Schools	26 schools	18 schools	7 schools	4 schools
Student Enrollment	71,988 students	33,910 students	15,955 students	3,014 students
% Total System Enrollment	28.1 %	30.6 %	27.8 %	18.3 %
Example	Benjamin Cardozo High School	Kenwood Academy	Northeast High School	West Roxbury High School
NON-SELECTIVE SCHOOL TOTALS				
Number of Schools	76 schools	54 schools	21 schools	13 schools
Student Enrollment	207,448 students	89,633 students	45,967 students	11,946 students
% Total System Enrollment	81.0 %	80.9 %	80.1 %	72.4 %
SELECTIVE VOCATIONAL				
Number of Schools	9 schools	6 schools	4 schools	not
Student Enrollment	16,555 students	11,870 students	6,072 students	applicable
% Total System Enrollment	6.5 %	10.7 %	10.6 %	
Example	Aviation High School	Chicago Vocational High School	Dobbins Voc-Tech High School	
SELECTIVE MAGNET				
Number of Schools	9 schools	1 school	3 schools	not
Student Enrollment	19,295 students	2,497 students	1,977 students	applicable
% Total System Enrollment	7.5 %	2.3 %	3.4 %	
Example	Edward R. Murrow High School	Whitney Young High School	Carver High School for Engineering & Science	
SELECTIVE EXAM				
Number of Schools	4 schools	2 schools	3 schools	3 schools
Student Enrollment	12,689 students	6,775 students	3,363 students	4,545 students
% Total System Enrollment	5.0 %	6.1 %	5.9 %	27.6 %
Example	Bronx High School of Science	Lane Technical High School	Central High School	Boston Latin School
SELECTIVE SCHOOL TOTALS				
Number of Schools	22 schools	9 schools	10 schools	3 schools
Student Enrollment	48,539 students	21,142 students	11,412 students	4,545 students
% Total System Enrollment	19.0 %	19.1 %	19.9 %	27.6 %
TOTAL CITYWIDE				
Number of High Schools	98 schools	63 schools	31 schools	16 schools
Student Enrollment	255,987 students	110,775 students	57,379 students	16,491 students

Note: For a list of individual schools in each category, see Appendix B.

Much of the resulting data for Chicago are summarized in Tables 5-A and 5-B, which indicate the percentage of students in a particular type of school with an indicated characteristic. For example, the upper-left-hand cell in Table 5-A indicates that in Chicago, 63% of students in Non-Selective Low-Income High Schools were low-income students. Such results are discussed in detail in the full research report. Below, we briefly summarize a few of the important patterns in the Chicago data:

- Non-Selective Low-Income and Low- to Moderate-Income High Schools enrolled high concentrations of low-income students, black students, Hispanic students, handicapped students, limited English proficient students, freshmen who read below the national average and below minimum competency levels, and freshmen who entered high school overage and thus had been held back.

- Selective Vocational High Schools enrolled percentages of low-income students that mirrored the system-wide average, disproportionate percentages of black students, and few students with handicaps or limited English proficiency. The percentage of freshmen entering these schools who read below the national average mirrored the percentage system-wide, but these entering students were much less likely to be reading below minimum competency than the system-wide average and less likely to enter high school overage.

- Selective Exam Schools enrolled significantly smaller percentages of low-income, black, and Hispanic students than the system-wide averages and significantly higher percentages of white and Asian students than the system-wide averages. They enrolled almost no handicapped students or limited English proficient students. They enrolled a much lower percentage of students reading below the national average and students who had been held back than the system-wide average.

- Students attending Non-Selective Low Income and Low- to Moderate-Income High Schools had extremely high rates of freshman course failure (for example, in the low-income high schools, 39% of freshmen failed English and 47% failed math). In these two types of schools, 39% to 49% of entering students dropped out. Despite these dropout rates, only 11% of graduating seniors read at or above the national average in Non-Selective Low-Income High Schools, and 53% of graduating seniors in these high schools read below minimum competency, i.e. at junior high school level. Combining dropout and reading achievement data, only 300 (or 4%) of students who entered Non-Selective Low-Income High Schools both graduated and could read at or above the national average. A single Exam School, Lane Tech had more than twice as many graduating seniors who read above the national average as did the city's eighteen Non-Selective Low-Income High School combined.

Other Options Schools and Programs

The academically-selective high schools discussed above are a subset of the set of options schools and programs that have proliferated in Chicago in the past fifteen years; the ones just discussed are all <u>separate</u> schools that have significant <u>academic</u> selection criteria. Similar academically selective <u>elementary</u> schools have been also been created during this period.

Table 5-A. STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS IN SIX TYPES OF CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOLS

Types of High Schools	% low income students	% white students	% black students	% Hispanic students	% Asian students	% Self-contained special education students	% Limited proficient English students	% Student absence	% Freshman reading below national average	% Freshman reading below minimum competency
Non-Selective Low-Income	63%	3%	68%	30%	0%	5%	6%	17%	90%	48%
Non-Selective Low to Moderate Income	42%	18%	61%	18%	5%	4%	5%	14%	81%	34%
Non-Selective Moderate Income	21%	30%	51%	16%	4%	2%	3%	12%	67%	21%
Selective Vocational	42%	4%	89%	7%	0%	1%	0%	10%	76%	17%
Selective Magnet	29%	17%	61%	13%	7%	7%	0%	10%	17%	> 1%
Selective Exam	18%	35%	42%	12%	11%	0%	0%	9%	16%	> 1%
ALL HIGH SCHOOLS	39%	17%	61%	18%	3%	3%	4%	14%	75%	30%

Table 5-B. STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS IN SIX TYPES OF CHICAGO HIGH SCHOOLS

Types of High Schools	% Freshman entering high school overage	% Juniors & Seniors enrolled in college Math	% of Freshman failing English	% of Freshman failing Math	% of dropouts in Class of 1984	% of Seniors reading at or above national average	% Seniors reading below minimum competency	% Class of 1984 graduating and reading above national average
Non-Selective Low-Income	51%	16%	39%	47%	49%	11%	53%	4%
Non-Selective Low to Moderate Income	49%	29%	33%	38%	39%	27%	32%	14%
Non-Selective Moderate Income	39%	25%	23%	32%	29%	39%	22%	24%
Selective Vocational	27%	16%	24%	30%	25%	30%	19%	20%
Selective Magnet	18%	60%	12%	15%	13%	73%	3%	57%
Selective Exam	12%	51%	15%	20%	13%	85%	2%	66%
ALL HIGH SCHOOLS	41%	26%	29%	36%	35%	35%	28%	19%

However, as noted in summarizing the recent history of options in Chicago, there are also other kinds of options that have been established, besides entirely separate academically selective schools.

- Separate schools to which students must apply for admission, but which do not have substantial academic admissions criteria. These options high schools may admit students by lottery from among applicants, or they may have other kinds of admissions criteria than academic achievement (for example, previous attendance or behavior).

- Academically selective and non-selective options programs housed within neighborhood or district schools, some operating essentially as separate schools and some constituting course sequences within the existing school program.

These additional options schools and programs had four main educational emphases:

- College preparatory options. Operating as programs within schools, these options typically had academically-selective admissions criteria and either provided a comprehensive college preparatory curriculum or placed special emphasis on particular curriculum areas, such as math and science or foreign languages. They sometimes mirrored the characteristics of the Selective Exam and Selective Magnet Schools. Example: International Baccalaureate Program at Lincoln Park High School and counterparts in elementary schools.

- Options with distinctive educational philosophies. These separate schools and programs within schools embodied a particular educational approach. Example: Walt Disney Elementary Magnet School and the Paideia Program at Austin Community Academy.

- Career exploration or vocational education options. These schools and programs provided general exposure to a broad career field such as the health professions or specific vocational training in an area like automobile repair or data entry. Some were modeled on the Selective Vocational Schools. Example: Word Processing and Typesetting at Amundsen High School.

- Dropout prevention and recovery programs. These schools and programs provided special help (generally in a small setting) to potential dropouts and to students who had dropped out and wished to return to school. Example: Farragut High School Outpost.

Dynamics and Impact of School Choice

Through interviews and other evidence indicated above, the research team gathered and analyzed evidence about (1) the process by which students were placed in various kinds of options schools and programs, (2) the impact of options schools and programs on non-selective neighborhood schools, and (3) the quality and effectiveness of options schools. Below, we briefly summarize conclusions about these topics, which are discussed in detail in the full research report.

The Admissions Process. Students ended up in the various types of schools and programs indicated above as the result of a complex admission process that included the following steps: recruitment and information–gathering, application, screening, selection of students offered places, and decisions by students. Analyzing each step in this process highlights the many points at which formal requirements, informal requirements, staff discretion, and parent or student initiative can affect the final result. Identifying critical dynamics of this process that shaped the composition of various schools was a central focus of the study. Below, we summarize a few key conclusions about this process.

First, families had an extremely variable understanding of the admissions process and decidedly unequal opportunities to gain admission to options schools and programs:

- The majority of Chicago students either did not apply for an options school or program at all or filled out an admissions form with little understanding of the complexities that would determine their chances of success.

- Most families did not understand such important aspects of the process as what statements to make on an application or in an interview to increase their child's chances for admission or what courses their child should take to prepare for admission.

- A small group of families—who were typically middle class and well–connected to networks of information and influence—devoted enormous energy to mastering the intricacies of admissions and serving as "advocates and negotiators" for their children's admission.

Second, given the complexity of the admissions process, counselors and other educators who took a special interest in a student played a critical role in determining who was admitted to options programs. At the elementary school level, educators had a self- interest in building their school's reputation by referring top–achieving students for high school options and discouraging "risky" students.

Third, options schools and programs often engaged in selective recruiting at middle-income public and private schools, whether the recruiting schools had selective admissions criteria or not. These practices were often based on a network of long-standing relationships between educators in various schools.

Third, admission processes were typically not subject to strong system–wide policy setting and monitoring during the period that we studied. Rather, individual schools were able to exercise a great deal of discretion in deciding whom to admit. In the resulting admissions process:

- Substantial admissions requirements in the areas of achievement, attendance, and behavior were common, even in schools that officially were supposed to be open to all students.

- Stringency of admissions standards was often based on the popularity of the program, rather than on the minimal level of competence needed to perform adequately in the program.

- Unsystematic and unvalidated admissions criteria detrimental to students at risk were often used in admissions, such as student interviews, locally–devised tests, and extensive requirements for previous course work.

- Admissions were often affected by the political influence of parents and by the parents' willingness to undertake extensive volunteer work for the school.

- Even in schools lacking significant academic admissions requirements, students with previous absence and/or behavior problems were frequently eliminated.

- Handicapped and limited–English proficient students were frequently discouraged from applying, and often no special services for these students existed in the options schools and programs.

Fourth, to the extent that schools were granted discretion in admissions, they consistently admitted the "best" students, with "best" being defined as students with good academic records, good attendance, good behavior, a mastery of English, and no special learning problems. This selection bias appeared to occur for three reasons:

- Research about teacher preferences indicates that, given a choice, most teachers prefer to work with high–achieving students and to avoid "problem" students.

- Schools in all four cities were publicly recognized as "good schools" if their achievement scores were high compared with other schools; they were not judged in light of the progress that they made with their students. Thus, the easiest way to build a reputation as being a good school and avoid a reputation as being a bad one was to recruit high–achieving students.

- White families and middle–class families of all races, who were best positioned to exert political influence in these cities and who saw options high schools and programs as an avenue for providing a good education for their children, worked diligently to structure the options system in a manner that gave their children a competitive advantage in securing admissions.

The potency of these organizational and political dynamics underscores the fact that creating equitable options programs is far more than a "design" task.

Fifth, the majority of students who applied were turned down. For example, many selective elementary school magnets admitted only 5 to 10 of every 100 applicants.

Impact on Neighborhood Schools. Beyond the impact of options on the students who attended them, the development of options had important impacts both on the rest of the schools in the systems—schools that were typically required to accept all students who resided within their attendance area.

- As indicated by Tables 5-A and 5-B, the high school admissions process further concentrated students at risk in non-selective low-income and low- to moderate-income schools.

- Options schools and programs were often given the right to select the best teachers, sending those that they didn't want to non–selective schools.

- Options schools and programs attracted and recruited the most active and well–connected parents, who were lost to the non–selective schools.

- Options formally or informally sent students who didn't meet their expectations back to their neighborhood schools.

- Despite their obligation to serve students with special learning needs, non–selective schools often came off second best in the allocation of resources. Sometimes, there were major differences in per pupil expenditure favoring options schools. At other times, the differences were smaller and subtler (for example, first priority in getting supplies or repairs), but the cumulative effect was great.

- Options schools and program typically had definite enrollment limits, and they could make clear plans for the coming year because their teaching staff and student body were essentially set by early summer. However, neighborhood schools dealt with a constant process of student enrollment and withdrawal. Neighborhood schools served as a buffer for options schools, allowing them to escape any obligation for dealing with fluctuations in enrollment.

- Neighborhood high schools and elementary schools who wished to gain a reputation were forced to concentrate limited resources on competing for and catering to high achieving students, rather than on upgrading the quality of education for the majority of their students. This dynamic calls into question a basic assumption made by proponents of school choice about its impact on school improvement.

- Less tangible, but extremely important, the growth of options has created a prevalent feeling among Chicago educators and students that students who don't make it into a selective options school (unless they attend an exceptional neighborhood school) are second–rate, and that the notion that the bulk of these students can master challenging work is "unrealistic," even though these students constitute the clear majority of students attending the Chicago Public Schools.

Quality and Effectiveness of Options. Without question, there are a number of high quality options in Chicago, options that are providing an excellent educational experience.

Despite such clear–cut examples of effectiveness, however, no careful studies have been done in Chicago and few have been done nationally to assess the quality of specific educational options or to determine whether they have brought their students to higher than expected levels of achievement taking into account students' achievement levels when they entered these schools. Evaluations of program effectiveness that take into account students' entry–level performance are especially pertinent, given the inequities in student access to these programs and the efforts of some magnet schools to portray themselves as effective, when their students' subsequent levels of achievement result from the fact that the school has selected a high–achieving student body.

Not only the impact, but also the degree of implementation of options merits careful analysis. In studying the implementation of all kinds of reforms, researchers have distinguished between a "problem–solving" orientation aimed at improving student performance and an "opportunistic" orientation aimed at achieving added funding or some other prerogative. There is wide variability in the quality of Chicago's options, with a significant number having been established primarily for opportunistic reasons. Opportunistic implementation (for example, relabeling an existing department as an options

program without significant curriculum changes) is relatively more frequent in options schools and programs serving students at risk.

Past Experience with Choice and the Chicago School Reform Act

The social action and the negotiations that shaped the Chicago School Reform Act provided an opportunity for many individuals to participate whose children did not attend the school system's options schools and programs and who had experienced first-hand some of the inequities documented by the research summarized above. Many of these parents were adamantly opposed to including any school choice provision in the bill. Initially, some of these parents argued that the reform law should abolish magnet schools. They moved away from this position largely because they saw that to attempt to abolish existing magnet schools was not politically feasible. However, these parents were determined to keepany additional choice provision from being incorporated into the bill.

In contrast, C.U.R.E. members and business leaders believed that a carefully-crafted school choice provision could contribute to improving school quality, if school choice was conceived as supplementary to and subsequent to the shift to school-based governance. Thus, C.U.R.E. initially proposed that families would have increased school choice in the fourth year of the reform process, after all schools had been given a fair chance to improve, and that school admissions for exercising family choice had to be done through a lottery, if the number of students who wanted to attend a school exceeded available places. However, the opponents of any choice provision strongly objected to including the school choice provisions advocated by C.U.R.E. in the reform bill, and school choice was jettisoned in the June 1988 negotiations in Speaker Madigan's office. Instead, the group agreed only that the Illinois State board of Education would prepare a study of possible choice plans.

However, the Republicans who wished to modify the Democrats' proposed school reform bill in June 1988 made adding a school choice provision one of their priorities, and the Governor subsequently indicated that a choice provision would be part of his amendatory veto. In preparing this provision, the Governor was responsive to the concerns of the C.U.R.E. Coalition members, so that the final choice provision included in the law called for increased school choice on a phased-in basis beginning in 1991-92, and required admission by lottery and transportation for low-income students who wished to participate.

Some Key Conclusions about Voice and Choice

The fundamental mission of Designs for Change is to identify and advocate reforms in big city school systems that will substantially improve the quality of educational services for those urban students who are at high risk of school failure, including low-income, minority, and handicapped students. The research conducted by Designs for Change in Chicago and other large cities, DFC's direct experience in attempting to reform the Chicago Public Schools, and DFC's interpretation of research conducted by others cause us to draw numerous conclusions about the types of reform initiatives that will make a real difference in the education of urban students at risk and about reform initiatives that will either have no significant effect or have negative effects.

Below, we highlight a few of these conclusions concerning issues of voice and choice in big city school systems. Taken together, these conclusions challenge the adequacy of what currently appears to be the most popular remedy for what ails urban school systems, i.e. some combination of school-based management dominated by teachers and principals, coupled with family choice.

Concerning Governance

1. It is misleading to speak in general terms about the impact of "school-based management," "school-based governance," "decentralization," etc., without analyzing (1) specific details of the features of various plans and (2) specifics of the strategies being carried out for implementing such plans. These specifics of plans and their implementation will determine whether or not a significant impact on the quality of educational services to students at risk and on student performance takes place.

2. School-based management strategies that shift decision-making primarily to teachers and principals are unlikely to lead to major improvements in the quality of services to students at risk and in their performance. Under these circumstances, most schools are likely to make very modest improvements in service quality, since the extent of change is constrained by frames of reference that shape beliefs about what is possible, existing organizational routines, and political bargains.

3. The argument that school-based decision making should be dominated by teachers and principals to allow educators to exercise "professional judgment" deserves careful scrutiny. The knowledge base for such professional judgement is currently very modest, and often ignored by urban educators when it does exist. In Chicago and other large cities, the appeal for the public to defer to professional judgment has repeatedly been used as an excuse for practices that are harmful to children.

4. School-based management strategies that shift decision-making primarily to teachers and principals are most likely to result in significant improvements in the quality of services to students at risk in those schools that already have adequate levels of staff organization and competence, and least likely to result in significant improvements in those schools with the lowest levels of staff organization and competence, thus increasing inequalities among schools.

5. It is fashionable to make a distinction between governance reform and reforms that will affect the classroom. Granting the critical importance of the classroom in determining the quality of services for students, we are nevertheless struck by the extent to which educational practice at the classroom level is decisively shaped by policies and practices at other levels of the system. Properly crafted changes in governance can create potent incentives for improving the quality of educational services to students in big city school systems.

5. Giving parents and citizens an advisory role in school-based improvement will not have a significant impact on the quality of services to students, since both research evidence and experience in big cities indicates that such advice is consistently ignored.[38]

6. School-based governance in big city school systems is most likely to have a major impact in improving educational services to students at risk and improving student performance in instances in which it includes the following key features: (1) majority control of a school governing council that sets school policy by parents and citizens, (2) participation on this school governing council by school staff and by the principal, (3) training for council participation provided by groups independent of the school system, (4) school council obligations focused on setting and monitoring policies focused on school improvement , (5) significantly increased school-level control of the school's budget, (6) abolition of principal tenure, with principals hired on performance contracts by the school council, (7) increased authority for the principal in hiring, supervising, and dismissing

school staff, (8) decisive authority by the principal and staff over curriculum, within system-wide objectives, (9) central administration focused primarily on enforcement of basic rights and procedures and on activities that benefit from economies of scale, (10) embodiment of the restructuring program in state law, (11) availability of a range of advisory resources for assisting schools in the change process, and (12) continued involvement of an independent parent and citizen reform coalition to monitor the reform process.

Concerning Public School Choice

1. In school districts with a substantial number of low-income, minority, and low-achieving students, public school choice programs have almost always resulted in maintaining or increasing the isolation of these students at risk in separate schools and programs. Thus, in practice, public school choice typically becomes a new form of discriminatory tracking.

2. To the extent that schools of choice are granted discretion in admitting students, they almost always admit high-achieving and/or well-behaved students and avoid students at risk. This bias occurs because most teachers prefer to teach "good" students, because schools are almost always judged simply in terms of their students' achievement scores, rather than in terms of their students' progress, and because white families and middle-class families of all races are best positioned to influence the structure, procedures, and specific admissions decisions of public school choice programs.

3. Public schools of choice in big city school systems have a number of detrimental effects on non-selective neighborhood schools, which include taking their most capable teachers, parents, and students from them. To the extent that school choice motivates changes in neighborhood schools, these changes are almost always focused on attracting and serving high-achieving students, not on overall school improvement.

4. Unless there is a fundamental commitment to improve educational services in all schools in a school district for all student subgroups, school choice increases inequality.

5. There is virtually no systematic evaluation of the impact of public school choice on student performance, which takes into account such basic research issues as the nature of the "treatment," the entry-level performance of students, the adequacy of the measurement procedures used to assess the impact of choice programs, and differential impacts on various student subgroups.

6. Over-coming inequities in public school choice programs is far more than a "program design" issue. Creating school choice programs that are, in practice, equitable in their admissions and their treatment of students entails combatting deep-seated organizational and political dynamics. Given the documented inequities of public school choice and its questionable benefits, the burden of proof is now on the advocates of choice to demonstrate that equitable choice programs can be created in more than a handful of situations.

NOTES

1 These councils have had only advisory powers, and their advice is characteristically ignored when it conflicts with the preferences of school system administrators. The one major decision making power that the Local School Advisory Councils have had is been to interview applicants for principal and to make a recommendation concerning their preference. Usually, this preference has been honored. However, district superintendents have increasily attempted to manipulate this selection process by discouraging some candidates from applying while encouraging others, by limiting the amount of information about candidates available to parents, and by pressuring parents to recommend the candidate that the district superintendent prefers.

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4 United States v. Chicago Board of Education, 80 C 5124, U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois.

5 Patrick Shannon, "Mastery Learning & Reading: Instructional System or Management Straight Jacket for Teachers?" address given to International Reading Association, September 1982, as reprinted in *Substance* 7 (September 1982): 5-7.

6 Designs for Change, *The Bottom Line: Chicago's Failing Schools and How to Save Them* (Chicago: Author, January 1985).

7 Chicago Board of Education, *High School Renaissance: A Plan for Implementation* (Chicago: Author, November 1983).

8 Marty Gartzman, "Renaissance Flips, Flops Once Again," *Substance* 10 (May 1985): 13.

9 See, for example, Illinois State Board of Education, *Review of Special Education Administration Audit Report* (Illinois: Author, March 1987).

10 Urban School Improvement Act, P.A. 84-794, 1985 Illinois Legislative Service (West).

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12 For example, Designs for Change, *The Bottom Line;* Designs for Change, *Caught in the Web: Misplaced Children in Chicago's Classes for the Mentally Retarded* (Chicago: Author, 1982).

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[22] Chicagoans United to Reform Education, *Needed: A New School System for Chicago* (Chicago: Author, November 1986).

[23] Chicago United, *Reassessment of the Report of the 1981 Special Task Force on Education: Chicago Public Schools* (Chicago: Author, July 1987).

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[25] Some have speculated that the grassroots campaign that resulted in the election of Harold Washington as mayor in 1983 energized parents and served as a foundation for subsequent school reform activism.

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